

**CITY OF BIG RAPIDS
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
JULY 6, 2016**

Chairperson Schmidt called the July 6, 2016, Special Meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENT Sue Bean, Jennifer Cochran, Paul Jackson, John Schmidt, Tim Vogel,

EXCUSED Renato Cerdena, Chris Jane

ABSENT

ALSO PRESENT Mark Sweppenheiser, Neighborhood Services Director
Cindy Plautz, Neighborhood Services

There were 6 people in the audience.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Paul Jackson, seconded by Tim Vogel, to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2016, Planning Commission meeting as presented.

Motion passed unanimously with all in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None heard.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

GENERAL BUSINESS

Site Plan Review: Construction of a 15,625 sq. ft. Warehouse Addition at 1005 Baldwin Street

Motion was made by Tim Vogel, seconded by Paul Jackson, to remove the Site Plan Review for a 15,625 sq. ft. addition at 1005 Baldwin (Wolverine World Wide) from the table of the June 15, 2016 Planning Commission meeting.

Motion passed with all in favor.

Sweppenheiser introduced the request for site plan review saying that the City Commission looked at the plan for Wolverine World Wide (WWW) overflow parking at the July 5, 2016, City Commission meeting. They have agreed to allow temporary over flow parking at the Industrial Field parking area during construction of the proposed WWW addition. There will be a loss of 50 parking spaces at this time and office personnel will be instructed to park in the Industrial Field parking lot. They anticipate 120 days for the construction of the proposed addition. Sweppenheiser further stated that WWW has removed some of the trees from the western parking area allowing for more organized parking. They have also erected a barricade to eliminate parking on the City owned parcel.

Staff recommends approval of the site plan for the addition and the western parking area.

Schmidt asked if trash receptacles have been placed in the parking lots. Sweppenheiser advised him that they have been placed around the property. He added that he envisions some sort of permanent barricade being installed in the spring to prevent encroachment onto City owned property.

Gail Taylor, Director of Operations at WWW, said that she appreciates the opportunity of a Special Meeting of the Planning Commission in order to address their concerns. They have addressed the following:

1. Parking on City property: she presented a set of before and after pictures of the parking area to the Planning Commission showing that they have addressed the situation and employees now park on WWW property.
2. Haphazard parking: parking in the western parking area was difficult in the past due to the presence of trees. They have taken down some trees allowing for more orderly parking. They have gained 30 spaces and now have had empty parking spaces.
3. Trash: a meeting was held with WWW supervisors and lead people to make sure everyone knows what is expected of them to make sure WWW is a good neighbor. They are to make sure all employees are informed. Trash receptacles have been put out and they have increased monitoring of the parking lot after each break and after each lunch.
4. Trailer: the trailer that has been sitting on the north end of the parking has been removed. There is now ample space for 50 cars.

Taylor said that she has noticed an immediate difference and employees are more respectful. WWW has tried to show good faith and is getting more involved in the community. The proposed investment will bring 10 to 40 jobs to Big Rapids.

Written or Telephonic Correspondence Received by Staff

None

Vogel asked them to go over the plan for the addition. John O'Brian, Director of Facilities at WWW presented the plans to the Commission.

Cochran thanked Taylor for addressing the Planning Commission's concerns. Taylor added that they are asking the employees to go over the handbook and if it is not followed, they will be written up.

Vogel asked about outside lighting and made sure they plan on directing the light downward in an effort to keep the light from disturbing the neighbors.

The Commission asked about the length of time it will take to pave the parking areas and how much it would cost. Taylor said it will cost \$250,000 including the storm sewer installation.

Vogel read a sample motion and the Commission discussed it. They discussed the number of years it will take WWW to pave. Bean struggles with giving them even 3 years for completion saying that any other new business would be made to pave the parking. Jackson agreed and asked if the cost is out of bounds for WWW.

Ron Wazniak, WWW Director of Finances and Operations, described the nature of the project saying that for the last 40 years, raw materials were stored in Rockford and shipped to Big Rapids. It will save them money to have the warehouse located in Big Rapids. The market is competitive and the profit margin is not great. He stated that there is a point at which the addition won't make sense anymore and if they are made to pave the parking immediately, they would have to revert back to the warehousing in Rockford and abort the Big Rapids plan.

Cochran posed a question regarding the need to set aside money for projects such as paving in light of the fluid nature WWW's contracts afford them.

Taylor stated that WWW is a \$3 billion company. Moving the warehouse up here will save them money and they will be able to pave out of the money saved. She stated that they need time to insure the money will be there. She suggested they construct the parking lot in phases. They would do the storm sewer first and pave in 3 different sections/phases. She would ask the City to rely on their good faith to get the job done in the allotted time. Wozniak added that they have recently painted the building and added landscaping.

Schmidt added that the parking has been an ongoing situation over the years. It is out of compliance but will be paved over 4 years. He is happy to see their investment in Big Rapids and their commitment to pave the parking area but would like to see a consistent effort being made.

Bean stated that she is concerned about how they will be monitored. As time goes by the ability to get anything done may be lost.

Jackson added that WWW has been here a long time and they have earned the right for the City to take their word that they will get the parking area paved.

Cochran wondered about the likelihood of the paving cost still being the same in four years.

Taylor said the cost shouldn't go up more than 20% and they plan to do the work in phases starting with the storm water sewer and paving in thirds or even halves depending on their cash flow.

Motion

Motion was made by Tim Vogel, seconded by Paul Jackson, to approve the site plan for Wolverine World Wide (WWW) for a 15,625 sq. ft. warehouse expansion located at 1005 Baldwin Street, design plans dated May 19, 2016, with the following conditions:

- 1. Applicant shall provide a paved parking lot (130 spaces) located west of the main WWW building and west of the Fred Meijer White Pine State Park Trail as outlined in the June 15, 2016 letter to Steve Sobers City Manager. Construction shall be completed by *October 15, 2019* as per plans prepared by Mid-Michigan Engineering dated 5-25-2016.**
- 2. Applicant shall install and maintain only upon WWW property, parking row delineations on the entire WWW site by using all-weather materials and methods. Wolverine World Wide shall provide the number of parking spaces required in the Zoning Ordinance. Installation shall be completed by December 15, 2016.**
- 3. Applicant shall plant and maintain 30 street trees, 2 1/2" caliper in size along Fourth Avenue in the City right-of-way adjacent to WWW property. Trees shall be planted by December 15, 2016.**
- 4. Applicant shall install facility lighting so that the beam of light shines in a downward fashion and does not disturb the neighbors.**

After discussion, **Motion** was made by Paul Jackson, seconded by Tim Vogel, to amend the completion date in #1 of the Motion made by Tim Vogel from *October 15, 2019* to *October 15, 2020*.

Motion passed with all in favor.

Updated Motion previously made by Tim Vogel, seconded by Paul Jackson:

Motion was made by Tim Vogel, seconded by Paul Jackson, to approve the site plan for Wolverine World Wide (WWW) for a 15,625 sq. ft. warehouse expansion located at 1005 Baldwin Street, design plans dated May 19, 2016, with the following conditions:

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Motion passed with Paul Jackson, John Schmidt and Tim Vogel in favor. Sue Bean and Jennifer Cochran were opposed.

There being no further business, Chairman Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 7:08 p.m. with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia J. Plautz
Planning Commission Secretary